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— FBI Grumbles —

Attorney General Aggravated Bureau By Glowing Report on King Case

By Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

THE DEEP-seated unhappiness of J. Edgar Hoover's Federal Bureau of Investigation with its boss, Attorney General Ramsey Clark, was aggravated by Clark's misleading public optimism about a quick solution of the murder of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

FBI agents working on the King case grumbled privately that Clark's repeated statements hinting at imminent capture of the assassin were not justified by the actual progress of the investigation. On the contrary, some agents complained that what legitimate information the Attorney General did let drop risked drying up the killer's trail.

In Justice Department conferences, Clark justified his contribution to the credibility gap on the grounds that optimistic talk about closing the case "would help morale"—that is, calm down Negro anger in the turbulent days immediately following the murder.

Simultaneously, there is considerable skepticism inside the Justice Department and FBI that the present renewed investigation of Black Power extremist Stokely Carmichael will result in any action.

FBI agents are making detailed probes into Carmichael's role in formenting the Washington, D.C., riots of April 4-6 following Dr. King's death, but many feel Clark will never push for a Carmichael prosecution. The Justice Department staff overwhelmingly recommended a year ago that the Government seek an indictment of Carmichael, but the Attorney General vetoed the advice on grounds that it would only make him a martyr.

Barkan's Mission

THE LATEST secret mission by Al Barkan, organized labor's top political action agent, to Sen. Robert Kennedy's drive for the presidential nomination wound up a complete failure.

Barkan, head of the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education (COPE), flew from Washington to Indianapolis for a closed meeting last Tuesday of the Indiana AFL-CIO executive board. His mission: to win support for Gov. Roger Branigan, the favorite son candidate, against Kennedy and Sen. Eugene McCarthy in Indiana's May 7 primary.

Barkan was supported in this view by the United Steel Workers, powerful in the Gary area—but few other unions. While many Hoosier labor leaders said they would back Vice President Humphrey if he were on the ballot, they opposed supporting Branigan. Against Barkan and the Steel Workers were the United Auto Workers, machinists, plumbers, packinghouse workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, oil and chemical workers, teachers and municipal employes.

The result was neutrality by Indiana labor, a victory for Kennedy—thanks largely to his brother, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, who had spent the previous week urging Indiana union heads not to commit themselves.

Miller in South

WILLIAM E. Miller, the former New York Congressman who was Barry Goldwater's running mate in 1964, will be hunting delegates for Gov. Nelson Rockefeller in the South this spring.

As former Republican national chairman, Miller has plenty of political ties in the conservative South although lining them up for Rockefeller will be most difficult.

Miller's impending travels mark the slow upswing in Rockefeller's unannounced candidacy for the nomination.

The moderate Republican political pro, Al Abrahams, has been signed on as Washington-based trouble-shooter. He'll be making quick swings west, setting up Rockefeller President state and local campaigns. Some Rockefeller strategists want Abrahams to work into a key political intelligence job for the Governor as the pipeline between Washington and the New York-based Rockefeller staff.

Abrahams has excellent credentials for the job. He served as executive director of Republicans for Progress, a post-Goldwater organization that provided financing and research help for moderate-to-liberal Republican candidates.

Rockefeller's personal top-level research will be handled by New York attorney Oscar Rubhausen. The highly respected Richard Nathan, on leave from the Brookings Institution, will be chief of domestic affairs and Henry A. Kissinger of Harvard will handle foreign affairs.

Without fanfare, Rockefeller's Washington headquarters will be opened this week on Connecticut Avenue—but without the usual political fanfare and flag-waving.

A footnote: Gov. George Romney of Michigan attended a high-level strategy breakfast by Rockefeller supporters Thursday morning at Washington's Mayflower Hotel (at the invitation of Sen. Jacob Javits of New York) but remained uncommitted. He explained that he had to keep his favorite son status to keep Michigan's 48-member delegation from splintering. The consensus of others present was for a Rockefeller announcement of candidacy as soon as possible.

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